

Nottingham City Council Delegated Decision



Nottingham
City Council

Reference Number:

2550

Author:

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Department:

Communities

Contact:

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Subject:

Creation of two invest-to-save posts: 1 behaviour change officer (energy) and 1 energy monitoring officer

Total Value:

£56,000 (Type: Revenue)

Decision Being Taken:

1. Two approve the creation of 2 new posts (non-exec officer decision):
 - An energy monitoring officer, which will take more junior work away from energy officers, enabling them to focus on energy audits to identify savings, and as a traded service to NCC clients. These have fallen behind significant recently due to vacancies.
 - A behaviour change officer, which will take forwards some of the SCoRE programme which ends in September, as a tradable service, as well as providing behaviour change activities in the community and as part of our traded service package.
2. to endorse the spend of £56,000 on an invest-to save basis (portfolio holder decision)

Reasons for the Decision(s)

Behaviour change post

The cost of this post is approximately £30k full employer cost, with £160,000-£210,000 energy savings possible from energy budgets by focusing the post holder's activities on leisure centres and council offices. This is however based on literature (by bodies such as the carbon trust) since it has been some years since this kind of role has existed at NCC - the schools behaviour change post (SCoRE programme) made more modest savings as the schools focused the initiative on education as well as energy in the building, and because energy usage in schools is a small part of their overheads. This will also be part of our commercial offer to other local authorities, schools and acadmies, though it isn't yet clear whether there is demand.

These figures are based on the post holder spending a proportion of their time on other community engagement on energy savings to target fuel poverty, helping to meet the council PI on citizen's energy awareness.

Energy Monitoring Officer (EMO)

For a cost of around £26,000 this could make savings of £185,000 from additional monitoring of gas and electricity bills, and freeing up capacity for more senior staff to carrying out the data analysis and energy audits that result in energy savings opportunities. This is based on a similar level of performance to an existing EMO, and the type of work (and performance) being freed up in an existing energy officer post.

In both cases, whilst savings should significantly outstrip the cost, these are based on assumptions. I am therefore asking to create these initially as a fixed term contract for one year alongside monitoring of effectiveness to ensure savings are being realised greater than the employment costs.

Other Options Considered:

- Do not employ EMO. This would leave limited capacity for either trading on the electricity aspect of energy management, nor for driving improvements in NCC's own buildings' performance. Both of these will save more than the cost of the post.
- Stop behaviour change schemes. This is not favoured because evidence shows better success in saving energy where it is accompanied by behaviour change advice; and because of a commitment in the Nottingham Plan to community engagement on energy. This post will therefore help us meet energy and climate change strategy targets more effectively, save additional money from NCC energy bills and, following the success of the SCoRE programme, provide an income from the tradable service element.
- Outsource behaviour change to NEP or LAEP. This is not favoured because it prevents NCC from generating an income from the tradable service, would require finding the budget from within stretched business plans, and would be unlikely to cover the full range of services the behaviour change post would provide.

Background Papers:

Published Works:

Affected Wards:

Citywide

Colleague / Councillor Interests:

Consultations:

Those not consulted are not directly affected by the decision.

Crime and Disorder Implications:

n/a

Equality:

EIA not required. Reasons: n/a

Relates to staffing:

Yes

Decision Type:

Portfolio Holder

Subject to Call In:

Yes

Call In Expiry date:

04/08/2016

Advice Sought:

Legal, Finance, Human Resources

Legal Advice:

Legal Observations (employment law)

Under Section 7 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, any appointments to the proposed posts should be made on merit.

John Bernard-Carlin
Team Leader
Housing, Employment & Education Team
Legal Service Advice provided by John Bernard-Carlin (Team Leader) on 13/07/2016.

Finance Advice:

Advice incorporated in attachment. Advice provided by Gary Robbins (Finance Analyst) on 15/07/2016.
Advice documents: Energy Monitoring Officer and Behaviour Change Officer.docx

HR Advice:

The two new posts are being created on a fixed term invest to save basis. They have been graded through the Job Evaluation process.

For the Behaviour Change post, it has been agreed that this post will be initially ring-fenced for the two individuals within the Schools Officer posts who are currently at risk of redundancy due to the ending of a fixed term contract and are on Project People. An assessment would then need to be undertaken to ascertain who was appointed to the post. The Energy Officer post should go through the normal People Plus process.

As the post is initially temporary, an appropriate exit strategy must be in place in order to terminate the contract in line with NCC guidance in the result that the post cannot be made permanent at the end of the fixed term period. Management will need to ensure appropriate timelines are in place to notify the affected employees.

Management will also need to be aware of potential costs in any exit arrangement. Whilst an individual appointed to a one year temporary contract wouldn't normally be entitled to redundancy as they would have less than two years service, should they have previous continuity of service they would still have entitlement to a redundancy payment. Given that the Behaviour Change post is ring fenced to individuals currently on a fixed term contract with continuity of service, should they be appointed the cost of their current redundancy entitlement accrued to date and the additional entitlement accrued during this contract will need to be budgeted for. Given the temporary nature of the Energy Officer role, management may wish to consider a secondment arrangement.

Advice provided by Faye Truong (Service Redesign Consultant) on 13/07/2016.

Signatures

Alan Clark (Councillor) (Portfolio Holder For Energy and Sustainability)
SIGNED and Dated: 27/07/2016
Andrew Vaughan (Corporate Director Commercial and Operations)
SIGNED and Dated: 22/07/2016